

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ATHENS 06924 101622Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7186
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 6924

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PPDC, MARR, MASS, GR, US
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER KARAMANLIS AUGUST 7

REF: ATHENS 6783

1. THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS SHOULD BE READ IN CONNECTION
WITH THE ACCOUNT OF MY MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER
KARAMANLIS IN REFTEL:

2. KARAMANLIS, WHO HAS SHOWN ME LITTLE THAT PLEASES
HIM SINCE I'VE BEEN HERE, DISPLAYED MODERATE SATISFACTION
WITH THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER AND THE COMMENTS I WAS
AUTHORIZED BY THE PRESIDENT TO ADD. TWICE HE SAID HE
DIFFERED WITH THE PRESIDENT'S ASSESSMENT AND OUR
EXPECTATIONS FOR THE REGION IN THE PERIOD AHEAD BUT
ALLOWED THT HE HOPED THE PRESIDENT WOULD BE PROVED
RIGHT. HE SHOWED NO PARTICULAR REACTION TO MY
SAYING THAT WE WERE COMMITTING OURSELVES TO GREATER
EFFORTS AIMED AT ACHIEVING A CYPRUS SETTLEMENT. I
RAISED THIS QUESTION MORE PARTICULARLY LATER WITH
FOREIGN MINISTER RALLIS WHICH IS BEING REPORTED
SEPARATELY. ON PRESENT FORM, I'M NOT AT ALL CONFIDENT
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THAT GOG WILL WANT TO BE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN SUPPORT
OF OUR EFFORTS ALTHOUGH THIS MAY DEPEND ON WHAT SHAPE
THEY EVENTUALLY TAKE. WE WILL BE SENDING FURTHER
THOUGHTS ON THIS SHORTLY.

3. THE PRIME MINISTER PLACES GREAT STORE NOW IN THE
UNITED STATES PROVIDING ASSURANCES FOR MAINTAINING A

MILITARY BALANCE BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY BEGINNING WITH CONGRESSIONAL LANGUAGE TO THIS EFFECT IN THE CONFERENCE REPORT. I AVOIDED EXTENDED DISCUSSION ON THIS BEYOND NOTING THAT THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER SAID THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD ACCEPT THE GENERAL REFERENCE IN THE SENATE AMENDMENT. WE SHOULD AVOID, I BELIEVE, ASSUMING THE KIND OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR CREATING, MAINTAINING AND DEFENDING THE PRECISE KIND OF BALANCE AS WE DO PRESENTLY IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

4. WHILE KARAMANLIS CONTINUES TO PROFESS NO HOSTILITY TOWARD TURKEY HE REMAINS OBSESSED BY ITS ACTIONS AND WHAT HE PERCEIVES TO BE ITS POLICIES. TO HIM, ANKARA'S POLICIES ARE PERFIDIOUS AND ITS ACTIONS ARE THREATENING. THE MOST RECENT THREAT, HE SAYS, OCCURRED DURING THE GREEK/TURKISH AIR SPACE TALKS IN ISTANBUL (SEE SEPTE). THIS IS WHY HE CONTENTS ANY GOODWILL OF OURS TOWARD TURKEY WILL PROVE MISPLACED. IN THIS I SUSPECT HE HAS CONVINCED HIMSELF THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS IN FACT MADE A CHOICE OF AN UNWORTHY NATURE AGAINST GREECE. WHILE WE WORRY ABOUT TURKEY, WE TAKE GREECE FOR GRANTED. IN THIS SCHEME OF THINGS KARAMANLIS SEES HIMSELF AS UNSUPPORTED BY THE U.S. AND OTHER ALLIES AND THEREBY POLITICALLY VULNERABLE TO A PUBLIC OPINION WHICH HE DESCRIBES AS FEELING INTIMIDATED. ONE MIGHT WISH THAT HE WOULD EXERT MORE
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OF HIS INFLUENCE TO LEAD PUBLIC OPINION THAN REACTING TO ITS MORE IRRESPONSIBLE TENDENCIES.

5. WITH ALL THIS, KARAMANLIS REMAINS THE KEY TO EVERY-
THING HERE. HE (BEGIN UNDERLINE) IS (END UNDERLINE)
THE GOVERNMENT. OUR ABILITY TO WIN HIS SUPPORT FOR
OUR POLICIES WILL TURN ALWAYS ON THE DEGREE TO WHICH WE
CONVINCE HIM THAT WHAT WE BOTH SEEK - FOR GREECE AND
FOR THE AREA - IS GENUINELY COMPATIBLE.
MCCLOSKEY

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